

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

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INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

C O N F I D E N T I A L BELGRADE 1620

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PINT YO GR

SUBJ: VISIT OF ANDREAS PAPANDREOU TO YUGOSLAVIA

1. ANDREAS PAPANDREOU, LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION PAN-HELLENIC SOCIALIST MOVEMENT (PASOK) LEAD A DELEGATION ON A VISIT TO YUGOSLAVIA MAR 1 TO 4 AT THE INVITATION OF THE LEAGUE OF COMMUNISTS OF YUGOSLAVIA (LCY) AND THE SOCIALIST ALLIANCE (MASS LABOR FRONT ORGANIZATION). OTHER MEMBERS OF THE DELEGATION WERE NOT NAMED. THE VISIT RECEIVED EXTENSIVE PRESS COVERAGE AND PAPANDREOU WAS RECEIVED AT HIGH GOVT AND PARTY LEVELS--ASSEMBLY PRESIDENT GLIGOROV, VICE PRESIDENT BAKARIC AND SOCIALIST ALLIANCE PRESIDENT PETROVIC.

2. ACCORDING TO PRESS, PAPANDREOU WAS BRIEFED ON YUGOSLAV SELF-MANAGEMENT SOCIALISM (IN WHICH HE HAD REPORTEDLY EXPRESSED INTEREST) AND YUGOSLAVIA'S EXPERIENCE WITH NATIONALITY PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS. THERE WAS ALSO AN EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON THE BALKAN CONFERENCE, THE INTERNAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE TWO COUNTRIES AND YUGOSLAV-GREEK RELATIONS. PAPANDREOU ALSO BRIEFED HIS HOSTS ON PASOK'S PROGRAM AND ACTIVITIES.

3. THE ONLY STATEMENT ATTRIBUTED DIRECTLY TO PAPANDREOU APPEARED IN REPORT OF HIS ARRIVAL: "SELF-MANAGEMENT AND, CONFIDENTIAL

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OF COURSE, THE STRONG FEELINGS OF IDENTIFICATION OF THE

WHOLE COUNTRY WITH INDEPENDENCE LEFT A STRONG IMPRESSION ON ME AND WHEN I RETURNED TO GREECE THEY INFLUENCED MY THOUGHTS", HE REPORTEDLY SAID RECENTLY REFERRING TO HIS EARLIER VISIT HERE. HE WAS ALSO SAID TO STATE OFTEN THAT GREECE SHOULD FOLLOW AN ACTIVE, NON--ALLIGNED POLICY.

4. FACT THAT YUGOSLAVS ARRANGED A MEETING FOR PAPANDREOU WITH BAKARIC DEMONSTRATES DESIRE TO EMPHASIZE IMPORTANCE OF VISIT AND POSSIBLY ALSO TO FLATTER HIM. BAKARIC, AS VICE PRESIDENT, DOES NOT NORMALLY RECEIVE VISITING OPPOSITION PARTY LEADERS. HOWEVER, THE YUGOSLAVS GOT AROUND THE NICETIES OF PROTOCOL BY REFERRING TO BAKARIC AS A MEMBER OF THE PRESIDUM (THAT IS ABOUT AS CONVINCING AS SAYING SOMEONE MET WITH GERALD FORD, A PROMINENT REPUBLICAN). BESIDES, THERE WERE FORTY-SEVEN OTHER PRESIDUM MEMBERS TO CHOOSE FROM.

5. GREEK EMBASSY COUNSELOR WAS AMONG WELCOMING PARTY AT THE AIRPORT, BUT THE EMBASSY OTHERWISE HAD NO ROLE IN THE VISIT AND WAS RELUCTANT TO DISCUSS IT WITH US, BOTH DUE TO LACK OF INFORMATION AND TO POLITICAL SENSITIVITIES. HOWEVER, WE WERE INFORMALLY TOLD (AND REQUESTED TO HOLD IN STRICT CONFIDENCE FACT THAT VISIT DISCUSSED WITH US AT ALL) THAT THE VISIT IS ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF INCREASED CONTACTS BETWEEN YUGOSLAVIA AND GREECE, SINCE FALL OF THE JUNTA. THE GREEK EMBASSY ALSO NOTED THE PROMINENT PLAY THE YUGOSLAVS GAVE THE VISIT. COMMENTING ON ITS LACK OF INFORMATION, THE EMBASSY SAID THAT BEFORE GOING TO ROMANIA SEVERAL MONTHS AGO PAPANDREOU WAS BRIEFED BY CARAMANLIS. HOWEVER, THIS TIME HE WAS NOT, PERHAPS REFLECTING PAPANDREOU'S OWN DESIRE FOR GREATER INDEPENDENCE FROM GOVT POSITIONS. SILBERMAN

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